

Whereas many African Americans lived, toiled, and died in obscurity, never achieving the recognition they deserved, and yet paved the way for future generations to succeed;

Whereas African Americans continue to serve the United States at the highest levels of government and military;

Whereas the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass inspired the creation of Negro History Week, the precursor to Black History Month;

Whereas Black History Week represented the culmination of the efforts of Dr. Carter G. Woodson, the "Father of Black History", to enhance knowledge of Black history through the Journal of Negro History, published by the Association for the Study of African American Life and History, which was founded by Dr. Carter G. Woodson and Jesse E. Moorland;

Whereas Black History Month, celebrated during the month of February, dates back to 1926 when Dr. Carter G. Woodson set aside a special period in February to recognize the heritage and achievement of Black people of the United States;

Whereas Dr. Carter G. Woodson stated: "We have a wonderful history behind us. . . . If you are unable to demonstrate to the world that you have this record, the world will say to you, 'You are not worthy to enjoy the blessings of democracy or anything else.'";

Whereas since the founding of the United States, the country imperfectly progressed towards noble goals; and

Whereas the history of the United States is the story of people regularly affirming high ideals, striving to reach such ideals but often failing, and then struggling to come to terms with the disappointment of such failure, before committing to trying again: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) acknowledges that all people of the United States are the recipients of the wealth of history provided by Black culture;

(2) recognizes the importance of Black History Month as an opportunity to reflect on the complex history of the United States, while remaining hopeful and confident about the path ahead;

(3) acknowledges the significance of Black History Month as an important opportunity to recognize the tremendous contributions of African Americans to the history of the United States;

(4) encourages the celebration of Black History Month to provide a continuing opportunity for all people in the United States to learn from the past and understand the experiences that have shaped the United States; and

(5) agrees that, while the United States began as a divided nation, the United States must—

(A) honor the contribution of all pioneers in the United States who have helped to ensure the legacy of the great United States; and

(B) move forward with purpose, united tirelessly as "one Nation . . . indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

MEASURE READ THE FIRST TIME—S. 534

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I understand there is a bill at the desk, and I ask for its first reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bill by title for the first time.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 534) to prohibit funds from being used to carry out certain Executive actions

related to immigration and for other purposes.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I now ask for a second reading and, in order to place the bill on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I object to my own request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The bill will be read for the second time on the next legislative day.

MEASURE READ THE FIRST TIME—S. 535

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I understand there is a bill at the desk, and I ask for its first reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bill by title for the first time.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 535) to promote energy efficiency.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I now ask for a second reading and, in order to place the bill on the calendar under rule XIV, I object to my own request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The bill will be read for the second time on the next legislative day.

ORDERS FOR TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2015

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m. on Tuesday, February 24; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; that following leader remarks, the Senate be in a period of morning business until 12:30 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, and that the first hour be equally divided, with the Democrats controlling the first half and the Republicans controlling the final half. I further ask that the Senate recess from 12:30 p.m. until 2:15 p.m. to allow for the weekly conference meetings.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. MCCONNELL. If there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order, following the remarks of Senators MERKLEY and COONS for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY FUNDING

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I have come to the floor this evening to speak about the impending shutdown this week of the Federal Department of Homeland Security. At a time when the folks I hear from in Delaware, and I suspect what all of the Members in this Chamber are hearing, as we return from a week spent in our home States, are concerns about our national security.

Whether it is the heinous acts of ISIS abroad, or the real threats of the weather and recent weather-related events here at home, a central concern all of us should share in the Senate here tonight is about keeping our country and our constituents safe. Yet shutting down the whole Department of Homeland Security later this week would show a reckless disregard for our national security by the Republican leader and some of the hard-line conservatives who are, sadly, setting this agenda.

In my view, we do not need to be here. The Democrats and Republicans working together on the Appropriations Committee negotiated a strong bipartisan Homeland Security funding bill months ago. It is a bill that if it got a vote before the full Senate would absolutely pass. It makes wide, needed, broad investments in strengthening all sorts of different organs of our government at the Federal, State, and local level that strengthen our homeland security.

Instead, the other party has insisted on attaching political provisions to the bill that would overturn the President's Executive action on immigration. I know I do not need to remind the Presiding Officer or any of our colleagues that we have already debated and passed comprehensive immigration reform in this Chamber which, if taken up by the House, would have made the President's action completely unnecessary.

I think we all agree that congressional action is the preferred path toward fixing our broken immigration system. If that is what my colleagues on the other side of the aisle are really concerned about, then I am eager to discuss how we can fix our badly broken immigration system in a bipartisan manner by the preferred path of congressional action rather than Executive action.

But I think we should separate that debate over immigration and what is the right path toward a resolution of our broken system from a discussion about responsibly and sustainably funding our Department of Homeland Security. If we fail to fund Homeland